

Brief History of Islam

From the first Islamic state to the last Islamic empire
622-1922



Index:

- Prophet Muhammad's Early Life
- The first Islamic state 622
- Islamic document (Al-Wathiqah)
- Rashidun Caliphate
- The era of Caliph Abu Bakr
- The era of Caliph Umar
- The Covenant of Umar
- The era of Caliph Uthman
- The era of Caliph Ali
- Islam after the Rightly Guided Caliphate (Rashidun)
- The last Islamic caliphate 1922
- Islam world today

*** Prophet Muhammad's Early Life:**

In Arabic the word prophet (nabi) is derived from the word naba' which means news. Thus we deduce that a prophet spreads the news of God and His message, they are in a sense God's ambassadors on earth.

Their mission is to convey the message to worship One God. This includes calling the people to God, explaining the message, bringing glad tidings or warnings and directing the affairs of the nation. Muhammad's birth was accompanied by many miraculous events and the talk of the extraordinary events no doubt functioned as signs of Prophethood.

When a person accepts Islam, reconfirms his or her faith or prays any of the five daily prayers, they also affirm their belief in Muhammad as a Prophet of God; the final Prophet.

All the prophets were anxious to convey God's message sincerely and completely and this included the last prophet, Muhammad. During his final sermon, Prophet Muhammad asked the congregation three times whether he had delivered the message, and called on God to witness their answer, which was a resounding "yes!"

at the age of 40 when Prophethood was bestowed upon him, God continued to support and affirm his mission. Any account of Muhammad's life is filled with examples of his exemplary character; he was merciful, compassionate, truthful, brave, and generous, while striving solely for the rewards of the Hereafter.

By the time he was eight years old he had suffered through the death of both his parents and his beloved grandfather Abdul Muttalib. He was left in the care of his uncle and great supporter Abu Talib.

Read More on:

Signs of Muhammad's Prophethood (Part 1)

Prophet Muhammad's Early Life - IslamOnline

<https://islamonline.net/123986>

*** The first Islamic state 622:**

One of the great political documents in Islamic history is what has been known as 'Al-Wathiqah'. It has been considered by Islamic and Muslim scholars and thinkers as the constitution of the first Islamic state established by Prophet Muhammad in Al-Madinah in 622.

*** Islamic document (Al-Wathiqah):**

The document referred to in 622 AD is the Constitution of Medina (or Sahifa al-Madinah), an important historical document in the history of Islam, defining the rights and duties of the Muhajireen, Ansar, and Jews in Medina.

Importance of the document:

Regulating the relationship between the various components:

The document defined the coexistence of Muslims, Jews, and other People of the Book in Medina.

Establishing the Ummah:

The document formed the basis for the formation of the "Ummah" as a political and social unit comprising Muslims and others.

Defining rights and duties:

The document established a framework for the rights and duties of all residents of Medina.

Equality:

The document emphasized the principle of equality among all citizens in rights and duties.

Historical context:

The Prophet's Hijra:

The document was signed following the migration

of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) from Mecca to Medina.

Establishing the Islamic State:

The document represented a major step in the establishment of the Islamic state in Medina.

The Hijri Calendar:

The Hijra (migration) of the Prophet was adopted as the basis for the Islamic Hijri calendar, which begins in 622 AD.

In Islamic contexts, the term "Islamic document" commonly refers to the Quran, Islam's holy book, considered the verbatim word of God revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. It also includes other texts like the Sunnah (the Prophet's teachings and practices) and Hadith (narrations about the Prophet's life). Additionally, documents related to Islamic law (Sharia) and human rights, like the Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights, are also considered Islamic documents.

Key aspects of these documents:

Quran:

Muslims believe the Quran is the final and unaltered word of God. It is organized into chapters (surahs) and verses (ayahs).

Sunnah and Hadith:

These texts provide guidance on how to live a Muslim life, supplementing the Quran with practical examples and teachings.

Sharia:

Islamic law, derived from the Quran and Sunnah, provides guidance on various aspects of life, including personal conduct, social interactions, and legal matters.

Islamic Declarations of Human Rights:

These documents aim to articulate human rights within an Islamic framework, sometimes drawing from the Quran and Sunnah.

Examples of Islamic documents include contracts (like marriage contracts), historical records, and legal texts related to Islamic law.

The time of the Prophet Muhammad battles:

The time of the Prophet Muhammad saw several key battles that shaped the early Islamic community and the expansion of Islam. These include the Battle of Badr, the Battle of Uhud, the Battle of the Trench, the Conquest of Mecca, and the Battle of Khaybar.

Here's a brief overview:

Battle of Badr (624 AD):

This was the first major battle between Muslims

and the Meccan polytheists. The Muslims, though outnumbered, achieved a decisive victory, which was a significant turning point in the early days of Islam.

Battle of Uhud (625 AD):

This battle saw the Muslims initially gaining ground, but a misstep by some archers led to a reversal, resulting in losses for the Muslims. It's remembered for the resilience shown by the Prophet and his followers.

Battle of the Trench (627 AD):

Also known as the Battle of Khandaq, this defensive battle saw the Muslims successfully defending Medina against a large coalition of enemies who had dug a trench around the city.

Battle of Khaybar (628 AD):

This battle was fought against Jewish tribes in Khaybar, who had been a source of conflict and opposition to the Muslims in Medina.

Conquest of Mecca (630 AD):

After years of conflict, the Prophet Muhammad peacefully conquered Mecca with a large force. He showed forgiveness and mercy to the Meccans, and the Kaaba was cleansed of idols.

*** Rashidun Caliphate:**

The Rightly Guided Caliphate, also known as the Rashidun Caliphate, refers to the first four caliphs of the Islamic empire after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. These caliphs, Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali, are considered to have followed the Prophet's example closely and are revered in Sunni Islam as models of just leadership. Their reigns, spanning from 632 to 661 CE, are seen as a period of righteous governance and significant expansion of the Islamic world.

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

Abu Bakr (632-634 CE):

The first caliph, chosen by the community, known for his wisdom and strong defense of Islam against tribal rebellions.

Umar (634-644 CE):

Known for his strong leadership and military conquests, expanding the empire into Persia, Egypt, and the Levant.

Uthman (644-656 CE):

Oversaw the standardization of the Quran and continued the expansion of the empire.

Ali (656-661 CE):

Faced internal conflict and civil war, but is revered by some for his piety and justice.

The Rashidun Caliphate is significant in Islamic history as it established the foundation of the Islamic state, its administrative systems, and its legal framework. The period is also important for its military successes and the spread of Islam to new territories.

*** The era of Caliph Abu Bakr:**

the first Rashidun Caliph, lasted from 632 to 634 CE. His reign was marked by the suppression of tribal uprisings and rebellions, consolidating central Arabia under Muslim rule. Abu Bakr also initiated military campaigns into Syria and Iraq. Furthermore, it was during his time that the revelations of the Quran were compiled.

Key aspects of Abu Bakr's era:

Suppression of Ridda Wars:

Following the Prophet Muhammad's death, various tribes in Arabia rebelled against Muslim rule, some renouncing Islam. Abu Bakr effectively quelled these uprisings, known as the Ridda Wars, restoring unity to the Muslim community.

Expansion of the Islamic Empire:

Abu Bakr started the initial military campaigns into Syria and Iraq, laying the groundwork for later expansion under subsequent caliphs.

Compilation of the Quran:

Abu Bakr, recognizing the importance of preserving the revelations, ordered the compilation of the Quranic verses into a single book.

Administrative Reforms:

Abu Bakr focused on maintaining stability and order in the nascent Islamic state. He established a system for distributing Zakat (charity) and managing public resources.

Financial Stewardship:

Abu Bakr was known for his simple lifestyle and careful management of public funds. Historical accounts describe his House of Charity as containing minimal personal wealth.

Caliph Abu Bakr battled the Ridda wars, also known as the apostasy wars. These uprisings involved various tribes in Arabia who renounced Islam or withheld zakat (alms) after the Prophet Muhammad's death. Abu Bakr's decisive military campaigns brought these tribes back under Muslim control.

Elaboration:

The Ridda Wars:

Following the Prophet Muhammad's death in 632 CE, many Arab tribes, some newly converted to Islam, challenged the authority of the nascent Muslim state in Medina. Some renounced Islam altogether, while others refused to pay zakat, the obligatory alms tax.

Abu Bakr's Response:

Abu Bakr, elected as the first Caliph, faced a critical challenge to the unity of the Muslim community. He chose to suppress these rebellions with military force.

Military Campaigns:

Abu Bakr dispatched various military expeditions to subdue the rebellious tribes, including campaigns led by his generals like Khalid ibn al-Walid.

Outcome:

Through these campaigns, Abu Bakr successfully reasserted the authority of the Muslim state over Arabia, solidifying its political and religious unity.

*** The era of Caliph Umar:**

The era of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab, the second caliph of Islam, spanned from 634 to 644 CE.

This period was marked by significant territorial expansion, with the Arab armies conquering Mesopotamia, Syria, and parts of Iran and Egypt. Beyond military achievements, Umar's reign also saw the establishment of a robust administrative system, including a treasury, a police force, courts, and a pension system. He also introduced policies like religious freedom for newly conquered peoples, albeit with a special tax, and prohibited the purchase of land in newly acquired territories.

Here's a more detailed look:

Military Expansion:

Umar's reign saw rapid and extensive territorial expansion, transforming the nascent Islamic state into a major power.

Administrative Reforms:

He established a formal administration with a state treasury (Bayt al-Mal), a police force, courts, and a pension system for citizens.

Conquered Peoples:

Umar's policies towards conquered populations included religious freedom in exchange for a special tax (jizya) and prohibited the purchase of land.

Social Structure:

He introduced garrison cities for troops, separating them from the local population.

During his reign, Caliph Umar led or oversaw numerous significant battles as part of the Muslim conquests. These include the Battle of Yarmouk, the Battle of al-Qadisiyyah, the Battle of Jalula, and the conquest of Persia. He also played a role in the conquests of Armenia, Egypt (including the Battle of Nikiou and the conquest of Alexandria), and the establishment of garrison cities like Basra, Kufa, and Al-Fustāt.

* The Covenant of Umar:

also known as the Pact of Umar, is a historical document outlining the rules and restrictions for non-Muslims living under Muslim rule, particularly Christians and Jews, after the Islamic conquests. It's traditionally attributed to Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab, but is likely a later compilation of norms that developed over time. The covenant dictates conditions such as paying a jizya (head tax) for protection and exemption from military service, and restrictions on holding public office, building new churches or synagogues, and publicly

displaying religious symbols.

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

Historical Context:

The covenant emerged after the initial Islamic conquests of Syria and Palestine, likely around 637 CE.

Key Provisions:

It includes stipulations regarding:

Jizya: Non-Muslims (dhimmi) were required to pay a poll tax (jizya) in exchange for protection and exemption from military service.

Restrictions on Religious Practice: This included limitations on building new places of worship, displaying religious symbols, and public displays of religious rituals.

Restrictions on Social Interaction: Non-Muslims were generally forbidden from holding positions of authority or power over Muslims.

Dress and Appearance: In some versions, restrictions on clothing and appearance were included to differentiate non-Muslims from Muslims.

Purpose and Interpretation:

The covenant aimed to establish a clear distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims, reflecting a hierarchical relationship with Muslims in a position of dominance. While some scholars argue it ensured the protection and religious freedom of non-Muslims under Islamic rule, others emphasize the discriminatory nature of the restrictions.

Evolution and Significance:

The "Pact" evolved over time and is seen as a reflection of the evolving relationship between Muslim rulers and their non-Muslim subjects. It's a significant document in understanding the historical dynamics of Muslim-non-Muslim relations and the legal framework governing those interactions in the early Islamic period.

* The era of Caliph Uthman:

The reign of Caliph Uthman, the third caliph of the Rashidun Caliphate, spanned from 644 to 656 CE. His rule is notable for its significant territorial expansion and administrative changes, but also for growing internal strife that ultimately led to his assassination.

Key Aspects of Uthman's Era:

Expansion and Administration:

Uthman's reign saw further expansion of the Islamic empire, particularly into North Africa and Persia. He also focused on standardizing the Quranic text, creating a definitive version for all Muslims.

Controversies and Resentment:

Despite these achievements, Uthman faced growing criticism for perceived nepotism, particularly in his appointments of family members to high positions. This, combined with resentment over the distribution of war spoils, fueled discontent among some factions.

The Rise of Opposition:

A coalition of those who felt marginalized by Uthman's policies, including some companions of the Prophet, began to openly oppose his rule. This opposition grew stronger over time, eventually leading to rebellion.

Assassination and Legacy:

In 656 CE, Uthman was assassinated by rebels at his home in Medina. This event marked a turning point in Islamic history, triggering the First Fitna (first civil war) and leaving a lasting impact on the political landscape of the Muslim world.

Early Life and Conversion:

Uthman was one of the earliest converts to Islam and was known for his close relationship with Prophet Muhammad. He was also known for his wealth and generosity, which he used to support the early Muslim community.

* The era of Caliph Ali:

The era of Caliph Ali, the fourth caliph of Islam, spanned from 656 to 661 CE. This period was marked by significant internal conflict, known as the First Fitna, or the first Islamic civil war. Ali's reign was primarily defined by the aftermath of Uthman's assassination and the subsequent power struggles that divided the Muslim community.

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

Accession and Early Challenges:

Ali ibn Abi Talib became caliph after Uthman's death, facing immediate challenges to his authority.

The First Fitna:

The period was characterized by civil war between Ali and those who opposed his rule, particularly those who sought retribution for Uthman's murder.

Key Figures:

Notable figures involved included Aisha (a wife of the Prophet Muhammad), Talhah, and Zubayr, who initially supported Ali but later opposed him.

Consequences:

The First Fitna resulted in the first major split within Islam, leading to the Sunni and Shi'a branches.

Assassination:

Ali was assassinated in 661 CE in Kufa, Iraq, further escalating the conflict.

*** Islam after the Rightly Guided Caliphate (Rashidun):**

Following the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs (Rashidun), Islam continued to expand and evolve, marked by the establishment of new dynasties, significant cultural and intellectual developments, and the spread of Islamic influence across Afro-Eurasia. The political landscape shifted with the rise of the Umayyad Caliphate, which saw the rapid expansion of the Islamic empire and the establishment of new centers of learning and trade. This period also witnessed the deepening of divisions within the Muslim community, leading to the emergence of Sunni and Shia branches of Islam.

Key Developments after the Rashidun Caliphate:

Political Shifts:

The Umayyad dynasty (661-750 CE) replaced the Rashidun Caliphate, expanding the empire significantly and establishing a hereditary system of succession, unlike the elective process of the Rashidun. This dynasty's rule saw the conquest of Persia, North Africa, and parts of Spain, establishing cities like Baghdad and Cordoba as major centers of Islamic civilization.

Religious Divisions:

The death of Ali, the fourth Rashidun Caliph, and the subsequent establishment of the Umayyad dynasty exacerbated existing tensions regarding the succession to Muhammad. This led to the formalization of the Sunni-Shia schism, with Sunnis generally supporting the Umayyad Caliphate and Shias focusing on the descendants of Ali.

Cultural and Intellectual Flourishing:

The Islamic world experienced a period of significant cultural and intellectual growth, often referred to as the Islamic Golden Age. This era saw advancements in various fields, including mathematics, astronomy, medicine, philosophy, and literature.

Spread of Islam:

Islam continued to spread beyond Arabia, reaching new regions through military conquest, trade, and missionary activities. The Islamic empire's expansion brought diverse populations under its rule, leading to the development of distinct Muslim cultures and societies across Afro-Eurasia.

Continued Expansion and Consolidation:

The Abbasid Caliphate, which overthrew the Umayyads, continued to expand the empire and further develop Islamic law, theology, and philosophy.

In essence, the period following the Rashidun Caliphate was a time of both significant change and continuity in Islamic history, marked by political transitions, religious diversification, cultural flourishing, and the continued spread of Islamic influence across the globe.

*** The last Islamic caliphate 1299–1922 :**

The last Islamic caliphate was the Ottoman Caliphate, which was abolished on March 3, 1924, by the Turkish Grand National Assembly. The last Ottoman caliph was Abdülmecid II.

Here's a more detailed explanation:

Abolition:

The Turkish government, under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, formally abolished the Ottoman Caliphate, a move that marked the end of centuries of Islamic rule.

Historical Context:

The Ottoman Empire, which had held the caliphate for centuries, was dissolved following its defeat in World War I. The newly established Turkish Republic aimed to modernize and secularize the nation, leading to the decision to abolish the caliphate.

Last Caliph:

Abdülmecid II, who had been appointed caliph after the previous sultan was deposed, was exiled from Turkey along with the rest of the Ottoman royal family.

Significance:

The abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate was a pivotal moment in Islamic and Turkish history, signifying the end of a long-standing institution that had significant political and religious influence.

The Ottoman Empire's fall was a complex process, driven by both internal weaknesses and external pressures. Internally, factors like corruption,

economic stagnation, and the rise of nationalism among diverse populations weakened the empire. Externally, European powers competed for influence and territory, ultimately contributing to the empire's demise through alliances and military conflicts.

Internal Factors:

Corruption and Nepotism:

The Ottoman bureaucracy became riddled with corruption and favoritism, hindering effective governance and development.

Economic Stagnation:

The empire failed to keep pace with European industrialization, leading to economic decline and dependence on foreign powers.

Weak Leadership:

A series of weak Sultans struggled to implement reforms and adapt to a changing world.

Nationalism:

The rise of nationalism among various ethnic and religious groups within the empire led to revolts and separatist movements, further fracturing the empire.

Military Defeats:

Repeated military defeats against European powers exposed the empire's weaknesses and resulted in territorial losses.

Pan-Ottomanism:

The attempt to create a unified Ottoman identity through Pan-Ottomanism, which aimed to unite all Ottoman subjects regardless of ethnicity or religion, largely failed to gain traction.

External Factors:

European Competition:

European powers

like Britain, France, and Russia sought to expand their influence and carve up Ottoman territories, particularly in the Balkans and the Middle East.

The Eastern Question:

The "Eastern Question," referring to the strategic implications of the Ottoman Empire's decline, led to increased European intervention and competition.

Alliances:

European powers formed alliances to exploit the Ottoman Empire's weaknesses and pursue their own interests.

World War I:

The Ottoman Empire's alliance with the Central Powers in World War I ultimately led to its defeat and the formal dissolution of the empire.

In essence, the Ottoman Caliphate's fall was not a sudden event, but rather a gradual process shaped by internal weaknesses and external pressures that culminated in its collapse after World War I.

*** Islam world today:**

Islam, the world's second largest and fastest-growing religion, is followed by over a quarter of the world's population. It encompasses a wide range of beliefs and practices, with the two main branches being Sunni and Shia. Muslims are found across the globe, with significant populations in countries like Indonesia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India, as well as in Europe and North America. Today, Islam is also a powerful force in politics and continues to be reinterpreted in modern contexts.

Here's a more detailed look at Islam today:

1. Demographics and Geography:

Islam is the world's second-largest religion, with a diverse global presence.

The most populous Muslim countries are Indonesia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India.

Muslims also form substantial communities in Europe and North America.

Sunni Muslims make up the majority (87-90%) of the Muslim population, with Shia Muslims being the second largest group.

2. Core Beliefs and Practices:

Muslims believe in one God (Allah) and follow the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, as revealed in the Quran.

The five pillars of Islam are: declaration of faith, prayer, charity, fasting during Ramadan, and pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj).

Sufism, a mystical branch of Islam, emphasizes personal piety and spiritual experience.

3. Islam in the Modern World:

Islam has re-emerged as a potent political force, influencing social and political landscapes. There are diverse perspectives within Islam on issues like democracy, liberalism, and secularism. Muslims are actively engaged in addressing misconceptions and stereotypes about their faith.

Issues like gender, diversity, fundamentalism, and the relationship between Islam and the West are central to contemporary discussions.

Modern Islamic thought explores how Islamic traditions can be relevant and interpreted in the context of globalization and modernity.

4. Islamic Calendar:

Today's date in the Islamic calendar is 8 Safar 1447. The Islamic calendar is a lunar calendar, and the current Hijri year is 1447.

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